

Bedford Conservation Commission

The Conservation Commission is the municipal agency responsible for protection of Bedford's natural resources.

Chair: Arthur Black Smith

Vice-Chair: Lori Eggert

Clerk: Allan Wirth

Meetings:

Second and Fourth Wednesdays

Town Hall, 7:30 pm

Conservation Office: Elizabeth Bagdonas, Administrator

Town Hall - 10 Mudge Way, 1st Floor
Bedford, MA 01730
781-275-6211 (tel); 781-275-1334 (fax)
8 am - 4 pm

The Conservation Commission consists of seven volunteer members appointed by the Board of Selectmen. Its functions are to oversee the protection of wetlands, waterbodies, waterways, floodplains and riverfront areas, and to acquire and maintain open space land for the protection of natural resources and for the benefit and enjoyment of the citizens of Bedford. The Commission derives its jurisdiction from the Conservation Commission Act (M.G.L. Chapter 40, section 8C), the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act (M.G.L. Chapter 131, section 40), the Rivers Protection Act (St. 1996, c. 258) and the Town of Bedford Wetlands Protection Bylaw (General Bylaws, Section 54, as adopted at the 1987 Annual Town Meeting and amended through ATM95). The Wetlands Protection Act and the Bylaw require the Commission to review applications for projects within 100 feet of wetlands, waterbodies, waterways and floodplains, and within 200 feet of perennial streams and rivers. The Commission holds public hearings, issues decisions permitting work, inspects the work in progress, and upon completion issues Certificates of Compliance. It may issue Enforcement Orders if unauthorized activities are identified that cannot be resolved through more amicable means. Concerning land stewardship, the Commission proposes the purchase of conservation lands to the Town, executes these purchases, and oversees the maintenance and use of these lands.

Commission review and permitting responsibilities and actions vary slightly from year to year. The Commission's submittal to the annual Town Report provides details on each year's regulatory decisions, as well as other open space and management activities.

The acquisition, maintenance and improvement of conservation lands continues on an annual basis as funds and volunteer assistance allow. Annual mowing takes place on several conservation area fields, and a summer work program includes maintenance on most of the conservation area trails. The Bedford Conservation Land Stewards continue their commitment to monitoring the conservation areas and contributing their time and effort to improvements on the land. A Trails Committee has been established by the Selectmen under the guidance of the Commission, and many improvements have been planned and carried out. Residents interested in outdoor volunteer activities may contact the Commission, Stewards or Trails Committee.